

Campaign Finance Reform

The state of Connecticut has made history passing unprecedented reform to campaign finance laws. A full public financing of the system has been established, free of special interest money. This legislation continues to aid in cleaning up government and restoring public trust.

This landmark legislation **prohibits**:

- Lobbyist contributions and solicitations.
- State contractors and prospective state contractor contributions and solicitations.
- Ad book purchases to benefit all statewide office candidates, legislative candidates, PACs, and the state parties; closing the corporate contribution loophole.

This act establishes a voluntary public financing program called the Citizens Election Fund that provides grants to qualified candidates who agree to limit their expenditures. Participating candidates can only accept contributions limited to \$100, and statewide candidates must receive 90% of the qualifying contributions from within Connecticut, effective January 1, 2007.

I am proud to have supported this landmark legislation!



2005 Special Session

Energy Assistance

We passed a comprehensive package of initiatives in order to provide emergency home heating assistance to Connecticut families. Some of the initiatives that are part of the legislative package include:

- **Restored funding** and expanded access for the state's emergency assistance program.
- **Increased funding** for Connecticut's WRAP home heating system repair and replacement program.
- **Provided subsidized**, lower-interest home energy improvement loans to homeowners through the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund program.
- **Established home energy assistance and reimbursements** for tune-ups on heating equipment to share in the cost of tune-ups on furnaces and heaters conducted by residential fuel companies.
- **Assisted homeowners** to make their home more efficient by creating a winter-long "**Sales Tax Holiday**" on weatherization products and heating equipment.

For more information contact Infoline at 2-1-1 or visit www.infoline.org

Medicare Part D

This new legislation addresses some of the holes in the federal Medicare Part D Program, by covering the co-payments for both Medicaid and Medicare recipients (referred to as "dually eligible"), by establishing a \$5 million "Medicare Part D Supplemental Needs Fund" for hardship cases, and setting aside \$1 million for DSS to assist clients in choosing the most appropriate prescription drug program. **The deadline to choose a plan is May 15.** Also:

- On January 1, 2006, **coverage will begin** for enrolled seniors and "dually eligibles."
- Federal co-pays for dually eligibles will be covered.
- No ConnPACE recipients will be responsible for more than \$16.25 for prescription drugs in their plan's formulary.
- No one will leave the pharmacy without a 30-day supply of their prescription, if there is a question concerning payment under a Medicare Part D plan.

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Need Help Understanding And Enrolling In Medicare Part D? Contact the CHOICES Program: 1-800-994-9422

Dear Friends,

Since you received my 2005 end of the session newsletter, we have been busy with several "mini" sessions.

We took extra time to focus on the health and safety of our seniors and those in need by ensuring increased supplemental funding for the Medicare Part D program. Also, we passed legislation to provide emergency home heating assistance to Connecticut families to address the anticipated financial hardships many will be forced to endure this winter. Making history, the legislature passed unprecedented reform to Connecticut's campaign finance laws and established a full public financing system, free of special interest money.

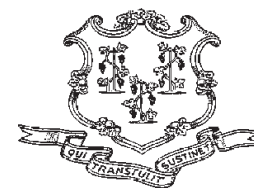
As 2005 comes to a close, I would like to thank all of you who took the time to share your interests and concerns. It's truly an honor to represent you! My best wishes for a happy, healthy new year.

Sincerely,



Patricia Widlitz

Assistant Majority Leader



Special Session Update

Representing Guilford and Branford

Finance, Public Health, and Banks Committees

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